

Spark Gap

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Emergency Communications Bill Includes Amateur Radio as Interoperability Agent

NEWINGTON, CT, Jul 27, 2006—A bill to enhance emergency communication at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) includes Amateur Radio operators as part of an overall effort to provide interoperability among responders. The 21st Century Emergency Communications Act of 2006 (HR 5852), an amendment to the Homeland Security Act of 2002, passed the US House this week on a 414-2 vote and has gone to the Senate. Its sponsor, Rep David G. Reichert (R-WA) — who chairs the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Science and Technology — says his legislation is designed “to improve the ability of emergency responders to communicate with each other” -- interoperability.

“Until the events of September 11, 2001, many people in this nation believed and assumed that first responders from different disciplines and jurisdictions could actually talk to each other,” Reichert — a former police officer — told the House in support of his bill. “It wasn’t happening. It is still not happening today. Unfortunately, that was not the case then, and, as demonstrated by the inadequate responses to Hurricane Katrina, that is not the case today.”

Reichert told his colleagues that the inability of first responders to communicate with each another effectively led to the loss of many lives along the US Gulf Coast last year. “This is simply unacceptable,” he said.

His measure also would require the DHS to strengthen its efforts to improve emergency communications. HR 5852 calls for Amateur Radio operators to be part of a “Regional

Emergency Communications Coordination Working Group” (RECC Working Group) that would be attached to each regional Department of Homeland Security office. The RECC Working Groups would advise federal and state homeland security officials. Membership in the RECC Working Groups would include state and local officials; law enforcement, first responders such as fire departments; 911 centers; hospitals; ambulance services; communications equipment vendors, telephone, wireless satellite, broadband and cable service providers; public utilities; broadcasters; emergency evacuation transit services; state emergency managers, homeland security directors or representatives of state administrative agencies; local emergency managers or

homeland security directors, and “other emergency response providers or emergency support providers as deemed appropriate.” According to the bill, the RECC Working Groups would function to assess the survivability, sustainability, and interoperability of local emergency communications systems to meet the goals of the National Emergency Communications Report. That report would be developed by the Assistant Secretary for Emergency Communications “to provide recommendations regarding how the United States can accelerate the deployment of interoperable emergency communications nationwide.”

HR 5852 has been referred to the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Bill **HR5852!**

*The Official
Newsletter of the
Mid-State Amateur
Radio Club*



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FCC Suspends Amateur Licenses for Failure to Maintain Mailing Address

NEWINGTON, CT, Jul 18, 2006—The FCC has suspended two Amateur Radio licenses because the holders had failed to maintain

correct mailing addresses in the Commission's licensee database. Special Counsel in the FCC Spectrum Enforcement Division Riley Hollingsworth wrote Larry L. Smith, KC7LJR, of Middleton, Idaho, and Larry J. Maniag, KD7JTG, of

Payson, Arizona, on June 28 to inform them the FCC was suspending their Technician tickets for the remainder of their license terms or until each licensee provides a valid mailing address.

In his letter to Smith, Hollingsworth noted that on three occasions in late 2005, the FCC had been unable to deliver warning notices alleging deliberate interference to a 2-meter repeater system.

He told Maniag that the US Postal Service earlier this year returned as undeliverable two warning notices alleging deliberate interference with several repeaters.

Hollingsworth cited §97.23 of the Commission's Amateur Radio Service rules that requires each license grant to show the licensee's correct name and mailing address. The rule provides that "revocation of the station license or suspension of the operator license may result when correspondence from the FCC is returned as undeliverable because the grantee failed to provide the correct mailing address."

Hollingsworth cited the same rule to an Ohio licensee apparently tempting a similar fate. On June 26 Hollingsworth afforded Robert D. Reckner, W8IQJ, more time to respond to complaints involving his service as MIDCARS net control station. The complaint alleges deliberate interference as a result of his starting the net on top of existing communications on 7.258 MHz on April 29, 2006. A June 1 letter enclosing the complaint came back to

the FCC as undeliverable, he said.

Smith and Maniag may appeal their suspensions pursuant to §303(m)(2) of the Communications Act, Hollingsworth pointed out.

Applications Dismissed

In another failure-to-reply case, Hollingsworth notified William E. Kuth, KB2SGQ, of Utica, New York, on June 27 that his license renewal application has been designated for dismissal. That action effectively eliminates Kuth's Amateur Radio privileges, and Hollingsworth reminded him of that fact.

"Upon dismissal you will have no authority to operate an Amateur Radio station," Hollingsworth said. "Also please be advised that operation on radio frequencies without a license is a violation of Section 301 of the Communications Act of 1932 and carries criminal penalties."

In May, the FCC notified Kuth that his renewal application "could not be routinely granted" and had been referred to the Enforcement Bureau for review. That followed the issuance of a *Warning Notice* for allegedly operating on 26.815 MHz without a license and causing interference on 10 meters. Additional complaints alleged that Kuth operated on 26.945 MHz.

Hollingsworth said postal records indicate that Kuth received the FCC inquiry on May 5 but did not respond. The letter to Kuth noted that the address on his renewal application differed from his actual mailing address. Kuth's Technician license expired in November 2004.

License Turned in for Cancellation

A Texas man turned in his Technician class Amateur Radio rather than respond to complaints alleging that he was operating on frequencies not authorized to him under his license and for causing interference. The Commission wrote Billy J. Benefiel, W5BJB, last November asking him to respond to the complaints, including one alleging that Benefiel had claimed on the air to be an Amateur Extra class licensee.

Note: *Make sure you notify the FCC whenever you change your mailing address and don't forget to renew your license.*



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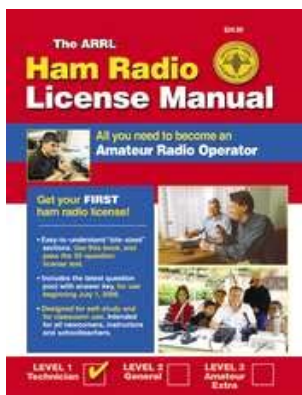
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Ham Radio Class

The Red Cross Disaster Radio Group will hold Technician level classes beginning Wednesday, September 13, 2006. Classes will run for eight (8) consecutive Wednesday evenings from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. Classes will be held at the Red Cross Chapter House in Indianapolis at 441 E. 10th Street.

This class is designed to teach interested people all the material needed to pass the technician class amateur radio exam. Morse code is no longer required for a technician level license. Classes are free and open to the public. All ages are welcome. All students must have a copy of the book, "The ARRL Ham Radio License Manual" available from the ARRL. Advance orders for the textbooks can also be made by calling the instructor, Jay Wright, at 317-203-3335.

To register for classes, contact Jay at 317-203-3335 or via e-mail at jay@southwesternelec.com.

FBI's "InfraGard" Program Courts Amateur Radio as Ally

NEWINGTON, CT, Jul 21, 2006—Amateur Radio's value as one component in a cooperative public/private-sector effort to protect critical national infrastructure was the focus of an InfraGard "Communications Interoperability and Ham Radios" summit this week in New York City. An FBI program, InfraGard is dedicated to promoting dialogue between the private sector and the federal investigative agency "concerning critical infrastructure protection issues." ARRL Chief

Development Officer Mary Hobart, K1MMH, and Affiliated Clubs/Mentor Program Manager Norm Fusaro, W3IZ, represented League Headquarters at the gathering, which featured a range of speakers.

"This is the key to opening the door to a valuable model partnership," Hobart commented afterward. "They were very receptive. I think it was a good beginning."

Hobart says Amateur Radio came up on InfraGard's radar earlier this year, and got the nonprofit organization thinking of Amateur Radio as a possible partner, ally and service provider in emergencies. New York Metro InfraGard put together the one-day session July 17 at Cisco Systems' New York office as a way to get more familiar with Amateur Radio.

"They understand that ham radio has 'been there' in terms of emergencies and disasters and is working to improve its ability to respond," Hobart said. She said New York Metro InfraGard President Joe Concannon "expressed his deep interest in Amateur Radio as a partner and a desire to learn more about our capabilities."

Keynote speaker for the day-long session was *Broadcasting & Cable* Hall of Famer and New York Public Television CEO William Baker, W1BKR. Jeff Pulver, WA2BOT, chairman and founder of pulvermedia.com and cofounder of Vonage, also addressed the gathering.

"This InfraGard meeting brought together a group of people who care about post-disaster communication preparedness, and a majority of the people in attendance were active members of the Amateur Radio community," Pulver observed later in a blog entry. "This was my first time in the post-VoIP era that I had a chance to talk to hams about my early experiences with VoIP and how my ham radio background has had a positive effect on the past 12 years of my life." Pulver said the InfraGard meeting provided "a great audience to speak to, since we shared a common passion for communications and common ground on a number of topics." He said that includes the need for coordination between the ham radio community and fellow communication enthusiasts "who want to volunteer their time the next time disaster strikes."

**WA9RDF
Repeater
146.835/
146.235 MHz
151.4 Hz PL
Tone**

**Weekly Net
Every Sunday
at 7PM EST**

***Tune in to hear
the ARRL
Newsline!***

Weekly Net

Make sure to check out our weekly net, held every Sunday at 1900 (7 PM) local time. This is a great chance to meet other local amateur radio operators and test your operating skills. Newline is often played, allowing net participants to get the latest news about the amateur radio hobby. For those without the license or means to check in over the air, we offer an email check-in. Just send an email with your name and contact information to netcontrol@midstatehams.org and we will record your check-in!



Mid-State Amateur
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2006 Schedule of Events

Public Service Events and/or Educational/Testing Opportunities

AUGUST 2006

- 8 Red Cross Disaster Radio Group Meeting**
Red Cross Chapter, Indianapolis, IN
- 19 MARC Meeting**
Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN
- 19 August Sprint Triathlon**
Indianapolis, IN (Contact Mike Palmer, N9FEB, www.indyhams.org for more info)
- 20 Lafayette Hamfest**
Tippecanoe County Fairgrounds, Lafayette, IN
- 26 Owen County Amateur Radio Hamfest**
Owen County Fairgrounds, Spencer, IN
- 27 Mideast Triathlon**
Indianapolis, IN (Contact Mike Palmer, N9FEB, www.indyhams.org for more info)

SEPTEMBER 2006

- 12 Red Cross Disaster Radio Group Meeting**
Red Cross Chapter, Indianapolis, IN
- 16 MARC Meeting, Annual Picnic, Election of Officers**
Church Shelter House, Franklin, IN
- 23 Greenwood High School Marching Band Invitational**
Greenwood, IN (Contact Bob LaGrange, N9SIU, for more info)
- 24 HARC Hamfest 2006**
Hancock County 4-H Fairgrounds, Greenfield, IN

OCTOBER 2006

- 8 Dad's Day Hamfest**
Lake County Fairgrounds, Crown Point, IN
- 10 Red Cross Disaster Radio Group Meeting**
Red Cross Chapter, Indianapolis, IN
- 21 MARC Meeting**
Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN

NOVEMBER 2006

- 14 Red Cross Disaster Radio Group Meeting**
Red Cross Chapter, Indianapolis, IN
- 18 MARC Meeting**
Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN
- 18-19 Fort Wayne Hamfest & Computer Expo**
Allen County War Memorial Coliseum and Exposition Center, Fort Wayne, IN

Mid-State Amateur Radio Club

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club meets the **THIRD SATURDAY** of each month in the basement of the Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, Indiana 46131.

See our website, www.midstatehams.org, for maps on how to get to our meeting.